

BRINGING THE HOLY NAME INTO MODERNITY:
A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ŚRĪMAD KĀNUPRIYA GOŚVĀMĪ

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As the first decades of the twentieth century saw early efforts for the expansion of Śrī Caitanya's Vaiṣṇavism outside of India,¹ in its original home the tradition itself was facing many difficulties. The European presence in India presented both an encounter with modernity and a challenge for self-assertion, and the followers of Śrī Caitanya were in the midst of developing and articulating their own responses. These manifested in the spread of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava literature and periodical journals published at the time.² The tension between receptivity and self-assertion is perhaps more evident in the production of literature made by many middle-class young Bengalis who were well acquainted with western culture, some of whom had been brought up within the western educational system and had later turned to Vaiṣṇavism³ as a way to rearticulate and reaffirm their own religious and personal identity. They were part of a larger phenomenon that included the emergence of Neo-Hinduism and Nationalism.⁴ Some authors, such as Premānanda Bhāratī and Dr. Mahānambrata Brahmācārī, directly addressed modern western audiences in a manner that implicitly recognized the value of their critique and acknowledged the need for a mutual dialogue and collaboration.⁵ Simultaneously, another kind of appeal was being made that was not directed towards a foreign audience but towards their own traditionalists at home. As Wilhelm Halbfass (1990) puts it, in relation to the predicament of the modern *paṇḍita* tradition:

The modern *paṇḍita* tradition is not just a tradition of memorization and textual learning, of passive possession and thoughtless perpetuation of inherited knowl-

edge. But regardless of all individual differences, the more fundamental question remains: Can those who preserve the traditional schemes of knowledge not just as contents of historical awareness, but as ways of seeing the world—can those guardians and representatives of the tradition and its authoritative language provide it with a living presence? Can they, who speak the language of the tradition, also speak for it in the modern world? Can they present it to the West and the Westernized world without simply being used as sources of information or objects of historical curiosity? Can they in turn comprehend this world within the horizon of their own inherited knowledge? Do they possess traditional means of understanding which are sufficient to respond to and interpret the modern world? Does the tradition itself provide such a framework of understanding? Is the tradition of the Sanskrit paṇḍitas the most authentic form of survival of traditional Hinduism? Are they more qualified to speak for the tradition than the Neo-Hindus? Do they represent the continued life and strength of the tradition—or its final petrification? (p. 260-261)

The engagement with modernity meant a similar pressing challenge for the traditional followers of Śrī Caitanya, one that was answered through the production of original books that reflected the need for self-actualization. This required an active engagement with new editions and translations in vernacular of the tradition's major Sanskrit texts and commentaries.⁶ It was a period of revival, reinterpretation and further development of the practices and ideas that had been foundational for the early generations of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas and that were at the moment perceived to be in the threat of becoming irrelevant and neglected.⁷

Śrī Kānupriya Gosvāmī (1891–1975) was a significant part of this revival. His considerations about modernity are directed mainly at his Indian audience, but are not exclusively for them. As we shall see, he first gained his reputation by his clear presentation in *Jīvera Svarūpa o Svadharma* (1934) of the general misconception that individuals have about their identity, which is the belief that our individual existence is temporary and that our identity is limited to our present bodily circumstances. Whether one is Indian or British, aspects like ethnicity, culture and geography are only additional layers upon the initial mistake of identifying ourselves with our bodies. Hence, his appeal bears the character of universality, but his concern about the state of the religion of Śrī Caitanya is mainly directed at his Indian contemporaries. A great personality of his time, Śrī Rasikamohana Vidyābhūṣaṇa, in the preface to *Jīvera Svarūpa*,⁸ echoed such concerns, along with his hopes for this revival:

Through many blows and counter-blows, actions and counter-actions, creations and breakings, the life of a literature can be unfolded and nourished. At the

present time, one can perceive signs of a new awakening of Vaiṣṇava literature in Bengali. Even though many deficiencies are visible at this time,⁹ it is a subject of hope and joy that now the body of society is being stirred by vibrations of life and is starting to blossom again. Life has begun; a living self has entered the body of society. It is natural that some deficiencies are seen at this energetic, uncontrollable time. (p. 91)

Śrī Rasikamohana Vidyābhūṣaṇa was already an accomplished senior Vaiṣṇava teacher at the time, and he was close to our author and his family. Much of the first-hand information on the family background of Kānupriya Gosvāmī that are presented in this article come from his writings translated by Dr. Neal Delmonico (2014). The immediate companions of Śrī Caitanya had been largely responsible for the expansion of the new religion throughout Bengal. This was accomplished by establishing families and disciplic successions that went on to form communities and popularize the practices of the religion in their own hometowns:

[Those ancestors] created on the dry bones of a dead society a magnificent flowering garden possessed of the sweetness and beauty of sacred love. With the wealth of Vṛndavana poetry those ancestors gave dead Bengali literature a new life, a new beauty, a new sweetness, and drew the eyes of the world to it. Those ancestors raised Bengali poetic literature to a position of respect and honor in world literature. Now their descendants, realizing their hereditary responsibilities, have entered onto the field of action. Among the writers of this order, the name of Śrīmad Kānupriya Gosvāmī Mahāśaya is particularly noteworthy. (p. 92)

... He was not educated in any school, college or traditional school (*catuṣpāthī*), but the kind of excellence in sagacity and learning and in bhakti and knowledge that he attained by the power of his keen intelligence, which he accrued from previous births, and by the grace of the Lord, all those qualities are rarely seen even among well-educated people. (p. 97)

Kānupriya Goswami was born to parents Surendranātha Gosvāmī and Vindhyāvāsīnī Devī on November 1st 1891, in north Kolkata. From childhood up until the age of eleven, he could not attend regular classes due to health difficulties, so he had to be educated at home¹⁰:

Though it may be true that Kānupriya never went to school formally and was to a large degree self-taught, it is hard to believe that his father did not either teach him himself or hire a tutor for him when he was a young boy. Kānupriya's knowledge of the scriptures of the Caitanya tradition, especially the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and the writings of the Gosvāmīs of Vṛndavana, was

indeed enormous and his writing style in Bengali was complex, sophisticated, and grammatically correct (Delmonico 2014 p. xviii)

Kānupriya Gosvāmī's father, Śrī Surendranātha Gosvāmī, was born in Bhājana-ghāṭa, Nadiyā, in 1863. He graduated from the Kolkata Medical College and practiced for a number of years, offering his services for free to many who couldn't afford them. At the same time, he became a prolific author. He is accredited with "some thirty-two works ranging from poetry [to] plays, and other literary productions" (Delmonico 2014 p. xv). It seems that he also wrote on medicine and biology, and at some point took especial interest in the study of Āyurveda, which resulted in the establishing of the Kolkata Āyurvedic Institution and Pharmacy School.

With the encouragement of his father, Kānupriya Gosvāmī studied at this school later on, and at some point also learned press related work. His resolutions not to marry and not to accept any money for his religious lectures throughout his life seem to have been influenced in some measure by his father as well.¹¹

The family traces their ancestry back to Śrī Sadāśiva Kavirāja, a close companion of Śrī Caitanya. He is mentioned along with his son and grandson in the main hagiographies of the tradition. For example, in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī says:

*Śrī Sadāśiva Kavirāja was a very great being.
And Śrī Puruṣottama Dāsa was his son.
From birth he was intent on serving at Nityānanda's feet.
He ceaselessly enacted childhood sports with Kṛṣṇa.
His son was the great soul Śrī Kānu Ṭhākura.
In his body resided the ambrosia of love of Kṛṣṇa.¹²*

Śrī Puruṣottama Dāsa Ṭhākura became famous for his active engagement with the emerging religion as one of the main followers of Śrī Nityānanda. Like his father, and grandfather, Śrī Puruṣottama Dāsa Ṭhākura's son was famous within the community of Vaiṣṇava followers of Śrī Caitanya; in fact the three of them were regarded as eternally accomplished companions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Rasikamohana Vidyābhūṣaṇa introduces him in this way:

... As a youth, he went to Vṛndavana with Śrīmatī Jāhnavā Devī. At that time, seeing his sweetness as he played the flute in addition to his supernatural beauty and unparalleled dancing expressions, Śrīpad Jīva Gosvāmī and the other teachers then residing in Vraja were astonished. From that time forth he became

known as “Śrī Kānu Ṭhākura”. This event was witnessed personally by the author of the *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata*, Śrī Vṛndavana Dāsa Ṭhākura and recorded as follows:

“When he was a teenager then in Vṛndavana I saw his great realization with my own eyes. In saṅkīrtana he was like a second Madanagopāla. With a pearl necklace swinging from his neck and a garland of forest flowers, the sound of his flute stole everyone’s heart. The Vrajavāsīs said he was Kṛṣṇa become visible. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī and the rest of the Vrajavāsīs saw his beauty and offered praise. From that time on his name became Śrī Kānu Ṭhākura . . . (p.92)

In connection to Śrī Surendranātha Gosvāmī and his son Kānupriya, Śrī Rasikamohana Vidyābhūṣaṇa continues:

. . . The most honorable and sagelike Śrī Surendranātha Gosvāmī Mahāśaya (BA., L.M.S.), was a special object of my affection. . . In age he was much junior to me, but because of his stolidness, profundity, sweetness, passion for knowledge, acceptance of renunciation, firmness in truth, measured speech, straight-forwardness, and above all his Vaiṣṇavism I always had faith in him. I loved him, had a deep affection for him, but that affection was not exactly like the affection one has for someone who is younger; it was an affection mixed with deep faith . . .

I have known the author of this book, Śrīmān Kānupriya Gosvāmī, since he was a child. His firmness in truth, purity of character, passion for dharma, and concern for maintaining proper etiquette developed in childhood. I had noticed those traits in him then, too. But, that he would attain the proficiency to increase the honor of his already universally honored family by becoming so highly regarded and respected in Vaiṣṇava society and by attaining such eminence in the world of Vaiṣṇava literature, that I could not foresee. (p. 97)

After the passing of his father, and as the elder brother of Gokulānanda and Rāmānātha Gosvāmī, Kānupriya Gosvāmī assumed the responsibilities at home during a period that must have been particularly difficult for the family due to their restricted economic situation. Eventually, his younger brother got married and had three sons and a daughter. His nephews Gaura Rai and Kishora Rai Goswami later continued his religious legacy after him, publishing new editions of his books and a collection of essays based on his lectures.¹³

His first book, *Jīvera Svarūpa o Svadharma* or *The True Nature and Function of the Living Being*, was published serially in 1934 by another well known personality of his day, Śrīla Prangopal Gosvāmī of Navadvīpa, in his *Śrī Śyāmasundara Patrikā*,

a popular Vaiṣṇava periodical journal of the time. The popularity of this book earned him the respect of his contemporaries and established his fame as a Vaiṣṇava author. For the purposes of this article, we'll rely on the English translation done by Jan Brzezinski and published by Sri Gaura Rai Goswami (2001). In its Introduction, he addresses some of his concerns regarding the conflicts and restlessness brought on by modernity for the present human civilization, and levels criticism towards what he sees as superficial approaches to the more pressing issue afflicting society at large.¹⁴ Lasting peace, for Kānupriya Gosvāmī, can only be attained by satisfying the needs of the self for experiencing love and happiness in connection with its true nature and function:

Without first determining “Who am I?” it is impossible to know “What do I need?” and “What should I do?” The first thing to know in the religious quest is what is the true nature and function of the living being or Jīva (p. 5)

To further elaborate on these questions, the issue of our relation to our body, to other beings, to the world, and to the divine is then problematized in the context of his very detailed exposition of Vaiṣṇava theology. He questions what we believe to be the causes for happiness in the world and determines that their proximity to our sense of self makes them appear as sources of happiness for us. Yet, he says, it is the conscious self who experiences both joy and sorrow in as much as it relates to the external world and invests it with meanings; after all, matter has no intrinsic capacity to produce or experience happiness on its own. The closer something appears to be to us (i.e., “my” or “mine”), the dearer it becomes, but even closer than our body, friends, family and material pursuits, is the source and eternal companion of that individual self, which he identifies with Bhagavan Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

The pleasure experienced by the self is the result of its own blissful nature, which it derives from a Higher Self. Being like the sparks of a blazing fire, living beings share the same eternally blissful nature of Kṛṣṇa, but as the sparks can become extinguished easily while a widespread forest fire is all-consuming, so, too, we become overwhelmed by ignorance of our true identity, while Kṛṣṇa remains as absolute knowledge and awareness himself. The intimate nature of the relationship between the individual self and the Higher Self becomes fully expressed through the manifestation of *bhakti*, he teaches which is an exclusive function of the Higher Self's unique nature.

Bhakti endows the individual with both full awareness of Bhagavan, and the capacity to engage selflessly in his direct loving service and experience the inextinguishable bliss derived from it. This is considered to be the goal of life. The

means for the attainment of this goal, as well as the many potential obstacles on the path, are carefully considered and described in the third section of the book.¹⁵

With a concluding essay titled *Reminiscence*,¹⁶ this English edition of *Jīvera Svārūpa o Svadharma* leaves us with an interesting set of reflections in regard to the future of human kind. The context is a detailed discussion on the notions of cyclic time, divine descents, and the special significance of Śrī Caitanya's appearance in the world for future generations, based on the tradition's interpretation of scriptural evidence.

In Kānupriya Gosvāmī's estimation, the current era of conflict will deeply worsen at an unprecedented speed; but will recede sooner than expected to make way for a peaceful era he calls *Prema Yuga*.¹⁷ This event will be marked by a widespread spiritual awareness resulting from the blossoming of the seeds planted during the time of Śrī Caitanya's advent:

The worldwide restlessness is the best proof that the coming of the religion of love will not be confined to a region or a part of the world but will be spread throughout the world . . . as the cool and soothing dawn kissed by the early morning sun appears after the dark and storm-devastated night . . . (p. 256)

In a different essay,¹⁸ Kānupriya Gosvāmī elaborates on the same subject:

When divine love rises in the heart of living beings, there is no more room for occurrences of harm, hatred, and so forth for one another because of the body, and things related to the body. In relationship to that one dear-to-all Higher Self-Supreme Lord the world becomes full of happiness.¹⁹ Since between each living being, then, there is no sense of difference, there is the inclination or possibility for each to be bound to the other by bonds of affection. Only in the heart of the living being does the true nature of the self in the form of the rise of divine love unfold . . . The best way of unfolding the highest nature of the self as the *bhakti* of divine love is singing the holy name. (p. 83)

The Holy Name is the subject of his second and most famous work, published in 1943, about which Delmonico comments:

. . . His second book entitled the Thought-Jewel of the Holy Name (*Śrī Nama-cintāmaṇi*) (1943) was even a greater success than his first. It was an elaborate apologetics on the power of the divine name, an important aspect of Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Theology, again presented in a cogent and logical way with numerous examples and analogies drawn from ordinary, familiar lives of his Bengali audience. As a result of the success of that book, Kānupriya Gosvāmī was given the title "Teacher of the Science of the Divine Name" by other Vaiṣṇava writ-

ers and groups of the time. The rest of Kānupriya's books were in some way centered around his book on the holy name. Two more volumes of the Thought-Jewel came out eventually, and two other books, 'A Small Piece of the Mystery of Bhakti' and 'Spotlight on the Mystery of Passionate Bhakti,' both rather large in size, both of which the author introduces as texts meant to be read as introductions to his main work on the divine name. (p. xix)

In the foreword to the original 1943 edition, written by Paṇḍita Pramathanātha Tarkabhūṣaṇa,²⁰ a hint is given about the particular specialty of this work:

The author's conclusion is that all the names from birth, that is, all the names established in scripture like Śrī Kṛṣṇa, etc., of the supreme lord (*parameśvara*) or the possessor of power (*śaktimat-tattva*) are not different from the supreme lord or the possessor of power and therefore in the Names all the powers of the Named are present. By invoking those Names living beings bring to perfection the highest goal of human life. This is in agreement with scripture and with the lived experiences of bhaktas. This is why the sacrificial rite of repeating the holy names (*nāma-yañña*) is superior to other forms of spiritual cultivation. (p.xiii)

In describing the true nature of the holy names, the author ultimately has praised the name Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the best among all the immortal names of the lord. In his view this is Brahman as sound (*śabda-brahman*). "But Kṛṣṇa is the lord himself,"²¹ following this statement of the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, we conclude the most excellent form of the lord is Śrī Kṛṣṇa and therefore the name "Śrī Kṛṣṇa" which expresses Śrī Kṛṣṇa himself is the best name of all . . . (p. xv)

Śrī Kānupriya Gosvāmī Mahāśaya has established the non-difference between this name and this named in an expert way in this book, Wish-jewel of the Holy Name (*Śrī Śrī Nāma-cintāmaṇi*). This truth of non-difference, which is established on the core conclusions of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava teaching, is not available gathered together in one place in such a clear fashion in any other modern book. Therefore, just as this book is suitable to be counted as a special jewel in the royal treasury of Bengali books, similarly it will give the greatest assistance on the path of practice to intelligent *bhaktas*—this I firmly believe . . . (p.xvii)

A collection of Lectures by Kānupriya Gosvāmī titled *Mahat-saṅga Prasāṅga* was published by Gaura Rai Goswami in 1970. These were centered mainly on describing the theology behind the power of association with the *bhakta* and with the Holy Name. The book was translated by Neal Delmonico and published by Blazing Sapphire Press in 2014 as *On Associating with Great Ones*.

To support his conclusions, Kānupriya Gosvāmī extensively quotes the main



scriptural sources in the Gauḍīya tradition, such as the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*:

“Practically speaking, apart from the conjunction of contact with the saintly and the *bhakti-yoga* of hearing and praising that comes from that, there is no other way to attain *bhakti*. This is because I [Kṛṣṇa] am the only shelter of the saintly”²² (p. 17)

... the *bhakta*, *bhakti* and Bhagavan (the Lord) have an unbreakable connection with each other. Therefore, wherever the *bhakta* is, there is *bhakti* in the form of discussions about Hari. And wherever *bhakti* is, there Bhagavan is certain to be present too ... These three are one and one is these three. And the co-existence of these three together is known in the world as *bhāgavata-dharma*, the way of the Lord (p. 18)

In the Appendix 1 of *On Associating with Great Ones* (2014) we find an elaborate essay where Kānupriya Gosvāmī shares his concerns regarding the pervasive and harmful effect of offenses to the Holy Name²³:

After repeating the Holy Name, when one does not see the rise of divine love in due time and in due course, one should know for sure that it is useless to search for other cause other than one brought about by offenses. That is because, apart from offenses to the holy name, there is no other cause for the holy name’s displeasure and its not revealing its might (p. 74)

... If one is able to remain single-pointedly sheltered by the holy name which is the best of all practices, Śrī Lord Holy Name, who is fond of those dependent on him, will protect in all respects such a sheltered person from the major chicanery of the Age of Kali in the form of the occurrences of offenses to the holy name (p. 75)

... Now, since the people of Bhārata have been specially infected with offenses to the holy name under the influence of the Age of Kali, the holy name, being displeased, has nearly stopped manifesting its power in the enormous and open-handed way (i.e., without regard for worthiness) it did before ... since that sort of causation does not exist for people of other countries, who are indifferent, it is hoped that it is possible to notice the influence of the holy name among them ... (p. 76)

Kānupriya Gosvāmī’s life was devoted to the service of his sacred image, inherited from his father. As the story goes,²⁴ while practicing medicine, his father once



treated the queen of Natore. Refusing any payment from the King, and after much insistence from the latter, he asked for a copy of a painting of Śrī Śrī Gauragovinda that was in the King's possession. He established the copy at his home as his own deity and named it Śrī Śrī Gaurarāya, an image of Śrī Caitanya holding a flute in the pose of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. "For all intents and purposes Śrī Gaurarāya was Kānupriya's family" (Delmonico 2014 p.xix). This same Śrī Gaurarāya is still being worshipped by his family members at his home called Śrī Gaurakiśora Śānti Kuñja, in Navadvīpa, where Kānupriya Gosvāmī lived until his passing in the year of 1975.

Śrīla Kiśorikiśorānanda Gosvāmī, better known as Tinkuḍi Bābā, was very close to our author,²⁵ and in a letter of appreciation to Manindranath Guha included in *The Nectar of The Holy Name* (Blazing Sapphire Press 2005), he wrote:

Hearing before that the spotless, full moon had set in India's sky of good fortune²⁶ I was deeply pained inside. After getting your letter and understanding the details of its content I felt some hope and some peace. Even though he has disappeared, the power of his bhakti for the Lord, endowed with his soothing and brilliant moonlight, has been established in you. This is indeed your good fortune. (p. xxxii)

Among his disciples, the names of Manindranath Guha and Sundarānanda Vidyāvinode stand out, as they themselves became well respected and renowned authors in the world of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism.

Kānupriya Gosvāmī's perspective on modernity was deeply rooted in the traditional worldview of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. Yet, it was this worldview that led him to recognize in modern circumstances the necessity for self-actualization. Re-kindling the distant memory of a glorious past was not enough. Rearticulating and, to some degree, reinterpreting the tradition to make it once again relatable for modern audiences was essential for the survival of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. In the words of H. G. Gadamer, quoted by Halbfass (1990):

Even the most genuine and solid tradition does not persist by nature because of the inertia of what once existed. It needs to be affirmed, embraced, cultivated. It is, essentially, preservation, such as is active in all historical change. But preservation is an act of reason, though an inconspicuous one.²⁷

Kānupriya Gosvāmī excelled at the task of using his creativity to conjure up new perspectives in relation to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava theology. Matters of national identity and interfaith discourse, so pervasive in Neo-Hinduism, seemed to have been secondary to him. His main concern was the need to re-appropriate their inheritance as *bhaktas* of Śrī Caitanya, and this was in itself his implicit response to the

challenges of modernity. In western audiences, he saw hope for future encounters based on mutual love, respect, and admiration, brought about by the influence of the singing of the Holy Name given by Śrī Caitanya, echoing throughout the world:

The Master said: “My name is ‘World-Filler.’
My name will be meaningful if I fill the world with divine love.”²⁸

*Singing the holy name
Is the highest way
In the Age of Kali.*²⁹

*In all towns and countries
That there are all around the world
Everywhere my name will be spread.*³⁰

Endnotes

1. Premānanda Bhāratī’s first trip to the U.S.A. in 1902, after lecturing in France and England, was covered by several journals and magazines of the time in New York. He made a considerable following in those days and returned for a second trip in 1910, before passing in 1914. Dr. Mahānambrata Brahmācārī attended the First Fellowship of Faiths, held in Chicago, in 1933, as a speaker, and later lectured in several different cities in the U.S. as the International Secretary of the World Fellowship of Religions in 1937-38. In 1933, the Gaudiya Math sent Bhakti Hriday Bon Mahārāja, their first international preacher, to London, where in time a preaching center was established in South Kensington, London, by the name of “Gaudiya Mission Society of London.” Curiously enough, these examples do not come from the more “traditionalist” groups, but from groups that had already introduced some form of innovation or variation to the tradition itself that differentiated them from the mainstream.

2. Delmonico identifies several of the most important literary figures in the world of Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism at the time, such as Śrī Hari Dāsa Gosvāmī, Shishirkumar Gosh, Śrī Vipinviḥārī Gosvāmī, Śrī Śyāmalāl Gosvāmī, Śrī Prangopal Gosvāmī, Dr. Radhagovinda Nath, Rasikamohan Vidyābhūṣaṇa, and Sundarānanda Vidyāvinode. (*On Associating with Great Ones* 2014 pp. xiv-xv)

3. The cases of Shishirkumar Gosh, Kedarnatha Datta Bhaktivinode, Premānanda Bhāratī and Mahānambrata Brahmācārī are worthy of mention in this connection as Vaiṣṇava authors who were either educated within the western educational system or who were very much familiar with western culture and values, which is evidenced in their writings.

4. “Referring to his choice of the word ‘Neo-Hinduism,’ Hacker says: ‘I do not know who

invented the term Neo-Hinduism. I found it in an informative article by Robert Antoine who presented the Bengali writer Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya (Chatterjee) as a ‘pioneer of Neo-Hinduism.’ Bankim Chandra lived from 1838-1894. Older authors, e.g., Rammohan Roy and his successors, were merely ‘forerunners’ in Hacker’s eyes. They could not have been Neo-Hindus in the complete sense of the term because the nationalism which Europe was bringing to India had not yet attained its full bloom in their day; Neo-Hindu nationalism in turn is inseparable from modernization and Westernization” (Halbfass 1988 p. 221).

5. Premānanda Bhāratī’s book *Sree Krishna—Lord of Love* (1904) was largely written and finished abroad, specifically as a presentation of the philosophy and religion of Sri Caitanya to English speaking audiences. Dr. Mahānambrata Brahmācārī’s participation as the International Secretary for the World Fellowship of Religions is an indication of his interest for interfaith and intercultural dialogue. He also graduated from the University of Chicago where he wrote his English dissertation entitled *Vaiṣṇava Vedānta* in 1937. Even before this, Kedarnatha Datta Bhaktivinoda wrote and sent a small text in English to several western scholars called *The Bhagavat: its philosophy, its ethics & and its theology. A lecture delivered at Dinajpore in 1869*. Worthy of mention in this connection as well is Shishirkumar Gosh’s own English edition of his famous *Śrī Amiya Nīmāi Carita*, titled, *Lord Gauranga, or Salvation for All*, in two volumes, published in 1897-98.

6. The major texts and commentaries within the Caitanya Vaiṣṇava community were being almost periodically published in new editions and translations during this period “beginning in the 1880s with the publication of the works of the Vṛndavana Gosvāmīs with major commentaries and Bengali translations by Rāmanārāyaṇa Vidyāratna at Barahampura in the Murshidabad District of Bengal. That body of publications was reissued in several newer editions by Rāmanārāyaṇa’s son Rāmādeva Mīśra, even into the 1930s. The canon was again published by Nityasvarūpa Brahmācārī from Vṛndavana in Devanagari script in the early years of the 20th century and again in the 1930s and 1940s by Haridāsa Dāsa Bābājī from Navadvīpa in Bengali script with Bengali translations. In the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s, Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī began the process all over again publishing the whole canon and then some in Devanagari script with Hindi translations while simultaneously Puridāsa Mahāśaya published the canon with verse indices and annotations on variant readings and manuscript sources in Bengali script. Finally, Haridas Sastri published the whole canon again in the 1970s and 1980s, also in Devanagari script with Hindi translations . . .” (Delmonico 2014 p. xvi).

7. Aside from the Western presence, there were other possible threats to the survival of the tradition. For example, controversies regarding deviance or misconduct of sub-groups claiming to be followers of Śrī Caitanya were common during these days, which prompted from within the mainstream tradition an effort to counteract the public accusations in relation to its religious tenets and practices. For a more detailed discussion of this see Lucien Wong’s article entitled *Against Vaisnava Deviance: Brahminical and Bhadrakal Alliance in Bengal* in *Religions* 9, 57 (2018). Hagiographical accounts of the lives of the saints in the line of Śrī Rādhārāmaṇa Carana Dāsa Bābājī, also known as Boḍo Bābājī, seem to indicate

that some of the many historical buildings associated with the tradition were in a state of decay or neglect in his days and he directed his disciple Śrīla Rāma Dāsa Bābājī to recover those sites instead of building new temples. This particular group also popularized a revival movement centered around the practice of Kīrtana with their own famous performances at different Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava historical sites and festivals around India.

8. For the purposes of this article, we'll rely on the translation of this Preface done by Neal Delmonico as it is found in the Appendix 2 of the book *On Associating with Great Ones* (2014).

9. Footnote in source text: "This essay is dated 1340 Baṅgābda or 1933 C.E."

10. The family website of Kānupriya Gosvāmī (from now on abbreviated here as FW), in a short essay titled "*Brief life history of Prabhupada Kanupriya Goswami*" states that, on the advice of his father, he used to read sacred texts along with English papers, and used to hold many discussions with devotees at his father's dispensary.

11. He was advised by his father: "Be religious, acquire unlimited learning, but don't sell religion to anybody." Kānupriya Gosvāmī promised his father before dying that he would never marry in order "to keep his family alive with respect" (FW).

12. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, 1.11.38-40 (Translation by Neal Delmonico 2014 p. xviii).

13. Śrī Gokulānanda Gosvāmī remained unmarried as well. Gaura Rai Goswami produced a book on the life of Kānupriya Gosvāmī and new editions of his books, along with a collection of essays based on his lectures. Kishora Rai Goswami also became a respected religious leader and teacher and wrote several original books of his own. "Kanupriya produced six major texts in Bengali with numerous citations from the Caitanya Vaiṣṇava scriptures and a series of essays edited by his nephews that were based on his lectures delivered at various times and in various places." (Delmonico 2014 p.xix). These six books are:

- 1) *Jīvera Svarūpa o Svadharmā*
- 2) *Śrī Nama-cintāmaṇi* (Three Volumes)
- 3) *Śrī Bhakti-rahasya-kaṇikā*
- 4) *Śrī Śrī Raga-bhakti-rahasya-dīpikā*

A collection of Lectures centered around the power of association was edited and published by Gaura Rai Goswami as *Mahat saṅga Prasāṅga* in 1970. Additionally, the FW mentions three extra books. We are reproducing their list here:

- 1) Jeeber Swarup O Swadharmā.
- 2) Vaijoyanti Prabandhamala.
- 3) Shri Shri Naam Chintamoni (1st Part)
- 4) Shri Shri Naam Chintamoni (2nd Part)
- 5) Shri Shri Naam Chintamoni (3rd Part)
- 6) Shri Bhakti Rahasya Kanika.
- 7) Shri Shri Raag Bhakti Rahasya Dipika.
- 8) Mohot Sango Prasango.
- 9) Pather Gaan O Lalosa Mukul.

14. Kānupriya Gosvāmī refers specifically to Communism and gives a lengthy exposition of the many pitfalls he sees inherent in its approach: “This communism, although apparently pleasing to the ear or enthusing and hope-giving to the poor and less fortunate, is nevertheless born of a grossly superficial understanding of the world situation.” (p. 25)

15. The content of the book is divided in three sections: *Sambandha Prakaraṇa* (translated as *A discussion of Relations*); *Prayojana Prakaraṇa* (translated as *The Goal of Life*); *Abhidheya Prakaraṇa* (translated as *The Means*).

16. The original footnote of this English edition provides the following information on the essay: “This reminiscence is written as the quint essence of the article with title ‘Phalguni Purnima’ in the magazine ‘Shri Sonar Gauranga’ published from Saistaganj Shrihatta (1335 B.S. Ashar-Agrahayan) and the Jyesthya month issue of 1338 B.S. (. . .)” (p. 237). The footnote also refers to the book *Vaijayantī prabandha-mālā* for a more complete version of this essay.

17. A Yuga is a period of time in puranic literature usually translated as an “Era” or an “Age.” A cycle comprised of four Yugas is known as a *Year of the Devas* or Mahā Yuga. Each Yuga in the cycle has a different time span, they are:

Kṛta or Satya Yuga = 1,728,000 human years

Tetrā Yuga = 1,296,000 human years

Dvāpara Yuga = 864,000 human years

Kali Yuga = 432,000 human years

“The names of the ages have interesting meanings. The Satya Age means the Age of Truth and sometimes the age is called the Kṛta Age or the Whole or Complete Age. Whole or complete is represented in the Indian game of dice by the number four or four dots. Tetrā means the Age of Threes, less complete than the Age of Fours or the Kṛta Age. The Dvāpara Age is the Age of Twos and the Kali Age is the Age of Ones. Kali is the dice with a single dot and is the losing throw in the game of Indian dice. Thus, the Kali Age is the last or unluckiest of ages.” (Delmonico 2007 p. 19). It is commonly believed that there’s a general degradation of qualities from the Kṛta Age down to the Kali Age.

71 cycles of these Mahā Yugas are known as a Manvantara, and 14 Manvantaras make up a Kalpa, or a Day of Brahmā. One month of Brahma are 30 Kalpas, and a year of Brahma is comprised of 12 of these months. Brahma is said to exist for 100 years.

In each Yuga, a particular descent of Viṣṇu initiates the form of religion for that Age, and these descents are named after the color of their complexion and in order of appearance as: White (*Śukla*), Red (*Rakta*), Dark Grey/Blue (*Śyāma*), and Black (*Kṛṣṇa*). However, Kānupriya Gosvāmī sates that in the Dvāpara and Kali Yugas of the 28th Mahā Yuga, within the period of the 7th Manvantara, in the first Kalpa of the second half of Brahma’s life span, there’s an exemption from the rule. Quoting the statements of Gargamuni to Nanda Mahārāja in the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* (10.8.13), he claims that Kṛṣṇa himself appears in that particular Dvāpara Yuga, followed by Gold or Yellow (*Pīta*) complexioned Śrī Caitanya

in the Kali Yuga. That is, the programmed descents named Śyāma and Kṛṣṇa, as parts of Bhagavan, are implicit in the full Bhagavan himself when he appears as Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya in this special cycle. According to the essay, Kṛṣṇa reveals the eternal religion of love, or Prema Dharma, in the Dvāpara Age, while Śrī Caitanya massively distributes it in the form of the singing of the holy name in the Kali Age. Kānupriya Gosvāmī compares this to a widespread shower of seeds for future generations: “The reaction of which are being seen some centuries after the withdrawal of Gaura-līlā—in the form of sowing the seeds and coming out of plants with twigs and branches and spreading all over the world and [they] will stay up to the balance period of Kali—which will be better than the Satya Yuga and will be a Prema Yuga” (p. 245).

18. This essay was translated by Neal Delmonico as the Appendix 1 for the book *On Associating with the Great* (2014).

19. The translation of this Introduction was shared by Neal Delmonico and is part of his ongoing work on the *Śrī Nama-cintāmaṇi* series of Kānupriya Gosvāmī.

20. Footnote in source text: “Prabhodānanda Sarasvatī, Śrī Caitanya-candrāmṛta . . .”

21. Footnote in source text: “*kṛṣṇastu bhagavān svayam.*” Originally from *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* 1.3.28.

22. Footnote in source text: “Bhāg., 11.11.48 . . .”

23. In a footnote, Delmonico lists the ten offenses as:

“Reproaching virtuous, honest people, especially holy men [and women] (*sadhu*).

Thinking that Śiva and other gods are independent of Viṣṇu.

Disrespecting one’s *gurudeva*.

Belittling the Vedas and sacred texts that follow them.

Hearing of the greatness of the holy name and thinking it is mere praise or eulogy.

Considering the greatness of the holy name as secondary or less important. Or, on another interpretation, considering some other method of spiritual cultivation to be greater than the holy name.

Engaging in sinful deeds on the strength of the holy name.

Thinking the holy name is on the same level as all other pious acts.

Trying to teach the stories of Hari and the holy name to people who have no faith or who are averse to Hari.

Being displeased when one hears about the greatness of the holy name.”

(*On Associating with Great Ones* 2014 p. 73)

The original list is found in *Padma Purāṇa*, Brahma Khanda, 25.15-18.

24. The story is from an essay on the life of Śrī Surendranātha Gosvāmī titled “*Brief life history of Kabiraj Surendranath Goswami*” posted on their FW.

25. In the Book “*Sādhu Sādhu*” by Śrī Vinoda Vihārī Dāsa Bābājī (Blazing Sapphire Press 2008) there are two *sūcaka kīrtanas* in honor of Tinkuḍi Gosvāmī, the first one makes mention of their relationship:

“Sometimes he went to visit

The ācārya of the science of the holy name

The two masters would fall to the ground
 Reciting verses in humility,
 Both their bodies covered with symptoms” (p. 125)

The original footnotes to that verse indicate that the *ācārya* mentioned here is Kānupriya Gosvāmī, and the symptoms refer to the “eight external symptoms of sacred rapture (*bhakti-rasa*).”

The FW notes that Kānupriya Gosvāmī “requested his [Tinkuḍi Gosvāmī] consent with folded hands to bid him farewell from this world. During Prabhupāda’s demise Śrīla Tinkuḍi Gosvāmī was at Vṛndavana and he arranged food offerings to 64 Abbots in his remembrance.” This offering is a common rite known as Chausati Mahānta Bhoga or the *Feast for the Sixty-Four Saints*, in honor of the sixty-four main saints in the Caitanya tradition.

26. Footnote in source text: “This is a reference to the then recent passing of Manindranath Babu’s *dīkṣā* guru, Śrī Kānupriya Gosvāmī.”

27. Footnote in source text: “H. G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method*. New York, 1985 (translation of *Wahrheit und Methode*).”

28. 1.9.5 (translation by Neal Delmonico 2014, p.89).

29. 3.20.8 (translation by Neal Delmonico 2014, p. 84).

30. *Caitanya-bhāgavata* 3.4.126 (translation by Neal Delmonico 2014, p. 88).

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